

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Sixth Ward Democratic Organization**  
Southside Wellness Center – Saint Louis, MO  
General Membership Meeting – March 20, 2008 at 7:00 pm

Alison Gee (Chair) called the meeting to order at 7:10pm.

Reading and Approval of the Minutes was not completed, as minutes were not presented.

Treasurers Report. Steve Zeiger reported a starting balance for 3.20.08 of \$2,676.04. A total of \$45 was deposited this first quarter, with total expenditures of \$1,066.66. Expenditures were primarily for printing, postage, and web design. Steve passed a copy of the most recent PAC report that was filed. A check for \$300 to pay the MEC fine has been given to the attorney but has not yet been filed with the MEC. Mary Entrup will check on the status of filing.

Presentation of Certificates. Alderman Triplett presented a certificate of appreciation to Mary Entrup for her years of service to the Sixth Ward Democratic Organization. Kathy Grillo, recent past Corresponding Secretary, was not present to receive hers.

Candidates for House 63. **Tishaura Jones** has been 8<sup>th</sup> Ward committeewoman since 2002, Treasurer for CD03, and Sergeant at Arms for the Democratic Central Committee. She is currently the Director of Organizational Development at People's Health Centers and the mother of an infant son. She is running on the issues of access to and affordability of healthcare, quality public education, economic development and neighborhood preservation. She supports 'green jobs' and will respond quickly to emails. **April Harris** has lived her entire life in the 6<sup>th</sup> ward, is an employee of the St. Louis Public Schools and union member and has a 3-point plan: healthcare for children, quality public education, and fairness for seniors. Her promise to the ward was "no senior in the 6<sup>th</sup> ward will be the victim of abuse or neglect."

Reports of Elected Officials. **Rep. Robin Wright Jones** indicated that not much is moving in Jefferson City, that while Insure Missouri is being re-engineered she believes some healthcare bill will pass. After spring break, the legislature will go straight to budget mark-up. The Governor is asking for \$250 million to be cut from the budget while state revenues are up. They are 'grasping at straws' for meaningful legislation. Missouri is 'at the top of every bad list and the bottom of every good list.' **Alderman Kacie Starr Triplett** noted the Board of Alderman is also on spring break. She noted that there is some foreclosure relief for those at 80% of the median income, about \$1500. She asked to be told of streets and alleys in the Gate District that need attention. She also noted that ACORN is mounting a campaign to register 50,000 voters. **Committeeman John Maxwell** encouraged members to attend the Congressional District presidential delegate caucuses on March 27.

Committee Reports. **Steve Zeiger** noted the Membership Committee had met and developed a list of recruitment and fundraising ideas such as house parties and advertising in the local newsletters. **David Lee** described the Voter Registration training that took place on March 15. He will conduct a second training on April 5 followed by a neighborhood canvass and voter registration drive. He is also looking at public school events, and registering voters at the Barr

Library monthly movie night. Ollie Stewart secured a table for registration at the Harris Stowe job fair on May 16.

Ballot Measures: What are they and how do they get there? **Brandon Davis**, SWDO Vice Chair and Coordinator of WE CAN—the effort to defeat an anti-Affirmative Action ballot initiative—shared information about ballot measures. Twenty-four states allow ballot measures. They can be statutory (place something in law) or constitutional (amend the state constitution), proposed by an individual or group, and must collect a designated number of signatures of voters in the state; the constitutional amendment has a higher threshold of voter signatures that must be collected. A third method is passage of a Joint Resolution by the legislature that places the initiative immediately on the ballot without gubernatorial intervention or approval; ‘English Only’ was approved by the legislature in 2007 for the November 2008 ballot. In Missouri, this has become a tool not just to change policy, but to shift elections. For example, the ban on same sex marriage on the 2004 ballot was intended to bring out conservative voters for the gubernatorial and presidential elections; then-Governor Bob Holden chose to put it on the August ballot to defuse its effectiveness. On the progressive side, the increase in the minimum wage initiative on the 2006 ballot clearly helped Claire McCaskill defeat Sen. Jim Talent who was against it; the measure passed with 72% of the vote and in every county. It was an effective wedge for the progressive/Democratic vote. This year about 45 petitions have been filed, but signatures must be turned in by May 4<sup>th</sup> to qualify; likely only a handful will qualify. These include initiatives to: lower the drinking age, restore the Medicaid cuts, require paper ballots, restrict use of eminent domain, approve a 50% tax credit for contributions to any charity, a ban on stem cell research, severe restrictions to abortion, a home care initiative, renewable energy standards, and eliminate affirmative action. Brandon noted that paid signature collection has become a big business with professional canvassers brought in from other states who have been known to lie about the true intent of the measures they are collecting for. He encouraged members to make sure they ask questions and know what they are signing.

Announcements/Upcoming Meetings: Alison Gee referred members to the listing on the agenda.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm